

Big Cypress

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Big Cypress
National Preserve



Guided Activities

Winter 2017 through Spring 2018

Join the Big Cypress National Preserve staff for FREE outings and activities that explore the wonders of the Big Cypress Swamp. For more details, visit our website at www.nps.gov/bicy. Some programs require reservations, which can be made up to 14 days in advance, between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. daily. Programs extend through April 14, 2018. Please see each program listing for the start date.

Activity Descriptions	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Gator Gossip (20 minute talk, 10:00 a.m.) Join us to learn about the science and secrets of alligators. Meet at the Oasis Visitor Center boardwalk. All ages, junior rangers welcome. ♿ Starts 12/24	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Mangroves, Manatees, and More (20 minute talk, 2:00 p.m.) Discover what makes mangroves and manatees unique in this hands-on, interactive talk. Meet at the Big Cypress Swamp Welcome Center viewing platform. All ages, junior rangers welcome. ♿ Starts 12/24	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Kirby Storter Stroll (1 hour hike, easy, 1:00 p.m.) Enjoy a casual one-mile walk along the Kirby Storter Boardwalk to a cypress strand. Bring along water, binoculars and insect repellent. Meet at the Kirby Storter Boardwalk parking lot along U.S. 41. All ages. ♿ Starts 01/07	X						X
Wet & Wild Walks (2 hour hike, moderate to difficult, 10:00 a.m.) Get your hands and feet wet while you discover the secrets of the swamp. Explore the cypress strand and search the sawgrass for wildflowers. Hike with us on this strenuous stroll. Wear long pants and sturdy shoes with laces that you can get wet and muddy. Bring a change of clothes and shoes. Meet at the Oasis Visitor Center. Recommended for adults, children 10 and up. Reservations required , call 239-695-1201. Starts 01/07	X	X					
Canoe Rendezvous (2.5 hours, moderate, 10:00 a.m.) Paddle through cypress and mangroves while we explore the river on this gentle interpretive tour. Canoes, paddles, and life jackets provided. Canoe and paddle basics required. Recommended for adults, children 10 and up. Reservations required , call 239-695-1201. Starts 01/11					X		
Birdwatching 101 (January 20, February 17, March 17, April 14 at 9:00 a.m. 1 hour). Look, listen, and learn. Explore a one mile round-trip walk to listen and look for birds of the swamp and be introduced to field guides and birding techniques. Bring binoculars, water, and a birding field guide. Insect repellent optional. Meet at Kirby Storter Boardwalk. Reservations required , call 239-695-1201. ♿							X

Explore Safely!

Before your adventure begins always let someone know where you are going and when you plan to return. Remember to fill out a backcountry permit if you are entering at one of the backcountry access points. To enjoy your visit come prepared by bringing water, food, sturdy shoes, sun protection, and insect repellent. Always be aware of your surroundings and be respectful of wildlife.

Wildlife Viewing

While visiting you may see a multitude of bird life, alligators and fish. Observe wildlife respectfully. Never attempt to feed or approach wild animals. Wildlife observation platforms are located at the Big Cypress Swamp Welcome Center, H.P. Williams Roadside Park, Kirby Storter Roadside Park, and at Oasis Visitor Center.

Driving

There is excellent wildlife viewing by car along the Turner River/Birdon Road loop, starting at H.P. Williams - 17 miles in length. Loop Road, another great option - 24 miles in length. These gravel roads offer views of national preserve animal life and subtropical habitats. Plan ahead and travel with a full tank of gas. Help protect wildlife by observing the speed limit. Stop by Big Cypress Swamp Welcome Center or Oasis Visitor Center for more information.

Hiking

The Florida National Scenic Trail runs through the heart of Big Cypress, presenting excellent backpacking opportunities in wetland habitats. Fire Prairie Trail is five miles round trip and is found off of the northern end of Turner River Road, providing superb views of several of South Florida's natural habitats.

Canoeing

Explore the waters of Big Cypress by bringing your own canoe or kayak, or renting them in nearby communities. The access for Turner River Canoe Trail is located along U.S. 41. Halfway Creek Canoe Trail offers a saltwater option with the ramp located off of U.S. 41 at the end of Seagrape Drive, three miles east of S.R. 29. Typical canoeing trips in the area will take a minimum of two to three hours.

Biking

Within the preserve, many of the gravel roads off of Tamiami Trail, and several of the off-road vehicle trails, provide opportunities for exploration by bicycle. The Bear Island Grade, accessible from S.R. 29, is a popular route. While biking, please be aware of traffic. While on backcountry trails yield to hikers and off-road vehicles. For more details on bike riding in the national preserve, please ask a park ranger or www.nps.gov/bicy/.

Join us for the 6th Annual Big Cypress Star Parties

Saturdays, 7:00 p.m.

- December 16
- January 20
- February 17
- March 10

Explore constellations, meteor showers, and more with park rangers and local astronomy associations.

Location: Big Cypress Swamp Welcome Center, 33000 Tamiami Trail East, Ochopee, FL

Weather: In the event of inclement weather, rangers will provide an interpretive program in the auditorium. Seating is limited and on a first-come, first-served basis.

What to bring: Lawn chair, bug spray, and red flash-light.

For more information
Call 239-695-1149

For more information

Big Cypress Swamp Welcome Center
33000 Tamiami Trail East, Ochopee, FL 34141
239-695-4757

Big Cypress Oasis Visitor Center
52105 Tamiami Trail East, Ochopee, FL 34141
239-695-1201

Website: <https://www.nps.gov/bicy/>

Emergency Dispatch: 1-844-NPS-0911 (1-844-677-0911)

Superintendent's Corner

Like our neighbors in Collier County, Big Cypress National Preserve received significant impacts to preserve facilities from Hurricane Irma's path. We are pleased to welcome you back to explore and discover the swamp and its rich resources. You may notice a slightly reduced program schedule this season as we work toward rebuilding our capacity for the future. I encourage you to visit all four of South Florida's national parks.

Superintendent Tammy Whittington